

# T H E R E H E A R S A L.

1. It wou'd seem as if *Personal* Prejudices were the Cause of the Discontent of our *Dissenters*.
2. The *Vindicator* Commends our first Reforming *Bishops*.
3. But turns this with Greater *Vehemence* against *Episcopacy*.
4. The *Moderation* of the *Dissenters* in this Point.
5. They Blame the *Moderation* of their *Ministers* at the *Savoy-Conference*.
6. They are now against even a *Moderate Episcopacy*, or any *Compliance*.
7. And set up for the *Height* of *Presbytery*, as in *Scotland*.

SATURDAY, July 19. 1707.

(1.) *Country-man*. I Suppose the Aversion of the *Presbyterians* in *Scotland*, and of our *Dissenters* here against *Episcopacy*, is not so much the *Thing*, as a *Personal* Prejudice they have Contracted against our *Bishops*. For I have observ'd that this is the most Part of their Discourse among the Common People, and of the *Books* which they throw among them, to tell vile and Scandalous Stories of the *Bishops* and *Clergy*, to Provoke and Enrage the People against them. The *Cobler of Gloucester*, Printed in the late times, was Read and Believed by many a poor *Country-man*, and that, with other such like *Libels*, helpt very much towards the overthrow of *Episcopacy* at that time. And the like Method has been taken since, The Multitude of Scurrilous and Nasty Pamphlets, with *Observators*, *Reviews*, and Rest of the *Scandalous Clubb*, have all gon on in the same Track, to Asperse and Blacken our *Bishops* and *Clergy*, to Render them most *Odious* to the *People*. But they Meddle not with the Argument of *Episcopacy*. By which it wou'd seem, That their Prejudices were *Personal*, and not upon *Principle*. And so we hope they may be the easier Reclaim'd.

(2.) *Rehearsal*. It is a strange Spirit that Possesses these men! Now in the Times of *Healing* and *Union*, instead of speaking *Moderate* things, and proposing their *Scruples* in a Fair and *Modest* Manner, they *Harden* themselves more and more, and give us still less Hopes of their Ever becoming One with Us. Their *Vindicator* whom we are now upon, in his *Short View*, p. 20. Speaking of our first Reforming *Bishops*, says, *Bishops* in those days, tho' *Prelates*, vested with *Civil Power*, wearing the *Habits*, and every way practising their *Church-Power* as

now, yet were *Holy* and *Worthy Christians*, and of the same *Class* with *Cranmer*, *Ridley*, *Latimer*, *Farrar*, and *Blessed Hooper*, who all of them Sealed the *Reformed Religion* with their *Blood*, and durst pass to the *Stake* and the *Flames* in Maintaining the true *Protestant Faith*, against that *Roman Anti-Christ*.

*Country-m*. This Confirms what I say; surely then their *Prejudices* now are only *Personal*. And if they had such *Blessed Bishops* as they here speak of, tho' Wearing the *Habits*, and vested with *Civil power*, they wou'd Chearfully Joyn with them.

(3.) *Rehear*. You have Reason to think so, *Country-man*. Who wou'd not think so? Who that had the least *Moderation* or *Christian Temper* in him, wou'd, for a *Habit* or a *Ceremony*, part with such *Holy Bishops*, and Raise a *Schism* against them? But as I told you from the Beginning, it is not *Habits* or *Ceremonies* are the Matter, the *Spirit* of *Dissenting* has Rais'd up these men to the Utter overthrow of *Episcopacy*, the *Primitive* and *Apostolical Government* of the *Church*; And they can be Content with Nothing Less.

This same *Vindicator* gives this *High Elogium* to our first Reforming *Bishops*, not to Reconcile Men the more to *Episcopacy*, supposing we cou'd have such *Bishops* (as you or any Man wou'd take the meaning to be) but Quite on the Contrary, it was brought in to Express the Greater *Indignation* against *Episcopacy*; That it was not to be Endur'd, even tho' in the Hands of the most *Pious*, *Holy*, and even *Martyrs* of *Christ*! For so the *Vindicator* explains himself in the very next words, and says, Let no Man suspect me here of favouring *Episcopacy*; for tho' of late Years, some of the Men have been a Scandal to the Office; yet I profess, were the *Bishops* now all *HOOPERS* and

and CRANMERS, I cou'd not agree to their Church Government.

(4.) Country<sup>m</sup>. Nay, then, all Hopes of Peace with these Men is vanished! They declare that they must Ever Battle Episcopacy. And I hope we shall Ever Defend it.

But what is the meaning then of all their violent Cry for Moderation? What Moderation is it they wou'd have had our Bishops put on? Was it to give up Episcopacy intirely, to make Root and Branch work with it, and to Un-Bishop themselves? If this was it, they had been Honester if they had so said, and then it wou'd Clearly have appear'd on which side Moderation did lie!

But I suppose they were for a Moderate Episcopacy, such as I have heard the Presbyterian Ministers at the Savoy Conference soon after the Restoration 1660, offer'd to Consent to, and so to be Call'd a Superintendency instead of Episcopacy.

(5.) Rehears. No. That will not do neither. The *Vindicator* owns p. 13. That they offer'd to submit to a Superintendency, or call it what you will, a Moderate Episcopacy. But he says, They went farther (in that) than any Body of the Dissenters in ENGLAND wou'd go now, and farther than they themselves wou'd ever after have gon again. And p. 25. he says, That some of the Dissenting Ministers at the Conference at the Savoy, and before at Breda, willing if possible, to avoid a Breach, and keep the Office of their Ministry, did offer to submit to a Moderate Episcopacy, or as the King himself call'd it, own'd the Essence of Episcopacy. Upon which he Comments thus, I'll grant that the Latitude of some of their Principles, and the particular extensive Charity of others, and the Circumstances of the whole at that time, carry'd them farther than wou'd consist with the Presbyterian Party, now Insisted on by both Churches. And adds, That they went farther than themselves, when they saw farther into it, wou'd afterwards Agree to, and a great deal more than others of their Brethren, even at that time, wou'd Comply with.

(6.) And to save the present English Dissenters from the Scandal of the Moderation, Latitude, and extensive Charity of these their Predecessors, he go's on p. 26. and says, But I make no question to prove here, that ther can be no Just Argument drawn from hence, to prove that the Dissenters now in ENGLAND, should be Charged with the same Compliance, or Distrusted on the Account of what then pass'd — But on the Contrary, that there are very good Demonstrations to prove that they would by no means Comply with any such thing; And that the Dissenting in ENGLAND and in SCOTLAND is on the same Foundation with one another, and no other.

(7.) Country<sup>m</sup>. Here's fine Work indeed! Here is Moderation for you, Peace and Union! For which this *Vindicator* has been Rending his Throat these several Years past! And now we see to what End and Purpose! When the violent Rabbling of the Episcopal Clergy in Scotland, at the beginning of the Revolution, and their Persecution since with their Denial of Toleration, &c. has been Objected; the Answer was, What have we to do with Scotland? The Presbyterians there are more Furious and of less Moderate Principles than the Peaceable Dissenters in England. But now Behold, the Two Sticks are made One! Now they are Both upon the same Foundation with one another, and no other. Upon the same Foundation of Abjuring Prelacy, and Rooting it out of the three Kingdoms, as they did before! Now the English Dissenters Despise any Compliance as much as the Scots!

Rehears. The Confederat Armies are Join'd, and now they speak out!

But the British Parliament will Judge of these things.

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